

PART I - ADMINISTRATIVE

Section 1. General administrative information

Title of project Purchase Conservation Easement from Plum Creek Timber Company along Fisher River	
BPA project number	20028
Contract renewal date (mm/yyyy)	
Multiple actions? (indicate Yes or No)	
Business name of agency, institution or organization requesting funding Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	
Business acronym (if appropriate)	MFWP
Proposal contact person or principal investigator:	
Name	Brian Marotz, Scott Snelson
Mailing address	490 N. Meridian Rd.
City, ST Zip	Kalispell, MT 59901
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Email address	marotz@digisys.net
NPPC Program Measure Number(s) which this project addresses 10.1, 10.2A, 10.3B.11, 11.1, 11.2C, 11.2D, 11.2E	
FWS/NMFS Biological Opinion Number(s) which this project addresses Bull Trout Listing Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Interior Redband Trout Recovery Actions	
Other planning document references <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fisheries Mitigation and Implementation Plan for Losses Attributable to the Construction and Operation of Libby Dam (MFWP, CSKT, and Kootenai Tribes of Idaho, 1997);2. Bull Trout Restoration Plan for Montana (Montana Bull Trout Restoration Team 1998);3. Montana Westslope Cutthroat Trout Restoration Plan (Montana Westslope Cutthroat Restoration Team, In Prep.)4. Hungry Horse Dam Fisheries Mitigation Implementation Plan (MFWP & CSKT 1993);5. Proposed Thompson and Fisher Rivers conservation project summary for Libby and Hungry Horse wildlife mitigation. October 1998.6. Stream Protection Act of 1963. <p>Supported by Montana's Wildlife Mitigation Advisory Committee (at Sept. 1997 meeting); Approval to proceed by MFWP Commission, Sept. 9-10, 1998; Letter of support from Governor Marc Racicot to PCTC Vice President Charles Grenier, dated December 10, 1996. MOU with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to help facilitate this project (May 20, 1998).</p> <p>County Commissioners for Lincoln county expressed verbal support during fall 1997.</p>	

Additional coordination and/or potential financial partners may include: Lincoln County Conservation District, Lincoln County Commission, Natural Resources and Conservation Service, Kootenai National Forest; US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS); Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; local and statewide sport and conservation organizations

Short description

Purchase perpetual conservation easement on up to 73,000 acres of PCTC lands in Fisher River watershed which precludes subdivision/commercial developments; conserves/enhances fish habitat, maintains public recreational opportunities, and insures continued timber production consistent with protecting fisheries habitat values.

Target species

bull trout, interior red-band rainbow trout, westslope cutthroat trout, burbot, other native fish, mule deer, elk, white-tailed deer, moose, black bear and riparian associated species.

Section 2. Sorting and evaluation

Subbasin

Kootenai River subbasin

Evaluation Process Sort

CBFWA caucus		CBFWA eval. process		ISRP project type	
X one or more caucus		If your project fits either of these processes, X one or both		X one or more categories	
	Anadromous fish		Multi-year (milestone-based evaluation)		Watershed councils/model watersheds
X	Resident Fish	X	Watershed project eval.		Information dissemination
	Wildlife				Operation & maintenance
					New construction
					Research & monitoring
				X	Implementation & mgmt
					Wildlife habitat acquisitions

Section 3. Relationships to other Bonneville projects

Umbrella / sub-proposal relationships. List umbrella project first.

Project #	Project title/description
20517	Libby Mitigation Program
8346700	Kootenai IFIM/Libby Mitigation

9608720	Montana Focus Watershed - Kootenai System (KR)
9401000	Excessive Drawdown Mitigation Program (EDDM)-Libby Reservoir Component

Other dependent or critically-related projects

Project #	Project title/description	Nature of relationship
8648701	Montana Focus Watershed - Flathead	Similar activities in Flathead watershed
9404900	Kootenai River Ecosystem Improvements Study (KTOI)(IDFG)	Ecosystem function
9101903	Hungry Horse Reservoir Mitigation	Parallel project in Flathead watershed
3874700	Streamnet GIS Unit	Provide GIS support and analysis

Section 4. Objectives, tasks and schedules

Past accomplishments

Year	Accomplishment	Met biological objectives?
1998	Fisheries conservation easements included in Libby Fisheries Mitigation Plan	No fisheries conservation easements to date.

Objectives and tasks

Obj 1,2,3	Objective	Task a,b,c	Task
1.	Develop easement terms and cost estimates.	a.	Select appraisers, approve methods, complete a certified appraisal
		b.	Negotiate conservation easement terms with PCTC to protect native fish species and their habitat
2.	Complete all NEPA/MEPA requirements	a.	Draft EA or EIS per NEPA/MEPA requirements
		b.	Complete draft management and monitoring plans and submit for public review
		c.	Hold public meetings/open houses to explain project and obtain input
		d.	Incorporate comments and release Final EA/EIS and Decision Notice
		e.	Draft legal documents for review by all signing parties
3.	Obtain funding and final authorities to complete proposed project	a.	Secure funding commitments from all cooperators.
		b.	Submit final project to MFWP Comm., PCTC Board of Directors and Montana Land Board for approvals
		c.	Finalize legal documents
		d.	Sign and record final agreement
		e.	Complete baseline inventory & reports

Obj 1,2,3	Objective	Task a,b,c	Task
4.	Monitor compliance and biological effectiveness of final agreement	a.	MFWP responsible according to agreed upon Management Plan

Objective schedules and costs

Obj #	Start date mm/yyyy	End date mm/yyyy	Measurable biological objective(s)	Milestone	FY2000 Cost %
1	10/1/98	12/31/99	Terms that provide biological benefits	Draft Terms	0
2	7/1/99	12/1/99	Evaluate biol. benefits and environmental impacts	Complete EA	0
3	10/1/99	9/30/00	Purchase easement	Record fisheries easement	\$500,000 (100%/yr)
4	9/30/00	ongoing	Annual monitor fish & wildlife pops., habitat & compliance with terms.	Annual Monitor rep.	0
				Total	\$500,000 (100%)

Schedule constraints

Either MFWP or PCTC could terminate discussion and negotiation of this project at any time. However, MFWP believes this project has an excellent chance of success.

This proposal also recognizes that the cost of this project is high and could fail for lack of sufficient funds. MFWP has allocated up to \$3,250,000 from the Wildlife Mitigation Trust Fund to use as seed money to leverage additional funds. If BPA Fisheries Mitigation Program provides \$500,000 up front (and a possibility of using other fiscal-year-end dollars when available), then the project has an increased probability of success. Total costs are unknown at this time but could range up to \$10,000,000 depending on project size and terms.

We have the opportunity to reduce the project scope to match available funds. However, fund-raising will allow completion of a larger, biologically more meaningful project. Other possible funding sources include: private organizations or other public funds such as MFWP's wildlife habitat conservation fund, etc.

This proposal seeks no additional administrative or operations/maintenance funds from BPA. Administrative needs will be met by the Fisheries Mitigation Program Officer (Brian Marotz) and by the Focus Watershed Coordinator for the Kootenai River (Scott Snelson). These individuals, along with review and input from BPA's fisheries contracting officer, will provide critical input into the development and implementation of this project.

MFWP and PCTC plan to complete this conservation easement by the end of FY 2000. If negotiations break down or if either party withdraws from the process, there would be no need for these funds.

Completion date

2002

Section 5. Budget

FY99 project budget (BPA obligated):	\$0
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FY2000 budget by line item

Item	Note	% of total	FY2000 (\$)
Personnel			0
Fringe benefits			0
Supplies, materials, non-expendable property			0
Operations & maintenance			0
Capital acquisitions or improvements (e.g. land, buildings, major equip.)		100%	\$500,000
NEPA costs			0

Construction-related support			0
PIT tags	# of tags:		0
Travel			0
Indirect costs			0
Subcontractor			0
Other			0
TOTAL BPA REQUESTED BUDGET			\$500,000

Cost sharing

Organization	Item or service provided	% total project cost (incl. BPA)	Amount (\$)
MFWP (Wildlife Mitigation Trust Fund)	Acquisition and planning costs	33%	\$3,250,000
Other partners or subsequent years	Acquisition costs	62%	\$6,250,000
BPA Fish Mitigation	Acquisition costs	5%	\$500,000
Total project cost (including BPA portion)			\$10,000,000

Outyear costs

	FY2001	FY02	FY03	FY04
Total budget	\$0	\$0		

Section 6. References

Watershed?	Reference
	Bissell, G. 1996. Hungry Horse and Libby Riparian/Wetland Habitat Conservation Implementation Plan. MFWP, Kalispell, Montana.
	Bonneville Power Administration and State of Montana 1988. Wildlife Mitigation Agreement for Libby and Hungry Horse Dams between Bonneville Power Administration and the State of Montana. DE-MS79-89BP92755
	Chisholm, I.M. and J.J. Fraley. 1986. Quantification of Libby Reservoir levels needed to maintain or enhance reservoir fisheries. Annual report. Prepared for Bonneville Power Administration by MFWP. Kalispell, Montana. Project No. 83-467.
	Chisholm, I.M. and P.D. Hamlin. 1987. 1985 Libby Reservoir angler census. Prepared for Bonneville Power Administration, by MFWP. Kalispell, Montana. Project No. 83-467.
	Chisholm, I.M., M.E. Hensler, B. Hansen, D. Skaar. 1989. Quantification of Libby Reservoir levels needed to maintain or enhance reservoir fisheries. Methods and Data Summary 1983-87. Prepared for Bonneville Power Administration by MFWP. Kalispell, Montana. Proj. No.83-467
	Dalbey, S.R., J. DeShazer, L. Garrow, G. Hoffman, and T. Ostrowski. 1998. Quantification of Libby Reservoir levels needed to enhance reservoir fisheries. Methods and data summary, 1988-1996. MFWP. Prepared for Bonneville Power Administration. Proj. No. 83-467.
X	Fraley J.J., B. Marotz, J. Decker-Hess, W. Beattie and R. Zubic. 1989. Mitigation, compensation and future protection for fish populations affected by hydropower development in the upper Columbia System, Montana, USA. Regulated Rivers: Research and Management.

X	Hauer, R. 1997. Kootenai river zoobenthos investigation. Kootenai River Fisheries Investigations - MT. MFWP. Annual Rep to Bonneville Power Administration. Proj. No.83-467.
	Huston, J. E., P. Hamlin and B. May. 1984 Lake Koocanusa Investigations – Final Report 1972-1983. MFWP, in cooperation with Seattle District ACOE.
X	Marotz, B.L., and J. Fraley. 1986. Instream flows needed for successful migration, spawning and rearing of rainbow and westslope cutthroat trout in selected tributaries of the Kootenai River. MFWP. Prepared for BPA. Proj. No. 85-6.
X	Marotz, B.L., B. Hansen, and S. Tralles. 1988. Instream flows needed for successful migration, spawning and rearing of rainbow and westslope cutthroat trout in selected tributaries of the Kootenai River. MFWP for BPA. Proj. No. 85-6.
X	Marotz, B.L., D. Gustafson, C. Althen and B. Lonen. 1996. Model development to establish integrated operational rule curves for Hungry Horse and Libby Reservoirs - Montana. MFWP. Prepared for U.S. Department of Energy - BPA. Proj. no. 83-467.
X	MFWP, CSKT and KTOI. 1997. Fisheries mitigation and implementation plan for losses attributable to the construction and operation of Libby Dam. MFWP, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. Prepared for Bonneville Power Administration. Proj. No. 83-467.
X	Montana Bull Trout Scientific Group. 1996. Upper Kootenai River drainage bull trout status report. Prepared for the Montana Bull Trout Restoration Team. 30 pp.
X	Montana Bull Trout Scientific Group. 1996. Middle Kootenai River drainage bull trout status report. Prepared for the Montana Bull Trout Restoration Team. 36 pp.
	Montana Westslope Cutthroat Trout Recovery Team. In preparation. Montana westslope cutthroat trout recovery plan. Prepared for MFWP, Helena, Montana.
	Perry S. and J. Huston. 1983. Kootenai River Investigations Final Report 1972-1982. Section A. Aquatic Insect Study. MFWP in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. 112p
	Shepard, B.B. 1985. Quantification of Libby Reservoir levels needed to maintain or enhance reservoir fisheries. Annual Report. Prepared for Bonneville Power Administration by MFWP. Kalispell, Montana.
	Skaar, D., J. DeShazer, L. Garrow, T. Ostrowski, and B. Thornberg. 1996. Quantification of Libby Reservoir levels needed to maintain or enhance reservoir fisheries; investigations of fish entrainment through Libby Dam, 1990-1994. Prepared for Bonneville Power Administration by MFWP. Kalispell, Montana.
	Snelson, S., C. Muhlfeld and B. Marotz. 1997. Excessive Drawdown Mitigation. MFWP. Completed Report filed with Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR.
	Wood, A. 1997. Wildlife Mitigation Program for Hungry Horse and Libby Dams Five Year Operating Plan (Fiscal years 1998-2002). MFWP, Kalispell, Montana.

PART II - NARRATIVE

Section 7. Abstract

The project would purchase a perpetual conservation easement from PCTC on up to 73,000 acres within the Fisher River drainage before PCTC sells these lands for other uses. The project seeks \$500,000 in capital funding to combine with Montana's Wildlife Mitigation Program as seed money to leverage additional funds. Project costs may reach \$10 million. Planning costs will be covered by MFWP budgets (including 9708720).

The easement would restrict subdivision/commercial development; ensure long-term maintenance/enhancement of native fish habitats; allow for restoration of streambanks and hydrology; continue management of timber resources consistent with these objectives; and provide associated recreational opportunities.

The 1994 Fish and Wildlife Program Plan emphasized coordination of Fish and Wildlife Mitigation Programs as well as restoration and enhancement of native resident fish species habitats. Montana's Wildlife Mitigation Program also emphasizes the role of partnerships to complete biologically sound, cost-effective mitigation (Wood 1997).

MFWP would negotiate terms, complete the NEPA/MEPA review, coordinate with other groups, and ultimately hold and monitor the easement. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation agreed to facilitate this acquisition process.

The project began September, 1997 with FWP Commission's approval to proceed. Coordination, appraisals, negotiations, and public review processes are expected to continue into 1999. Authorities to complete the project would be obtained by 9/30/00. A monitoring plan would be developed and implemented by MFWP.

Section 8. Project description

a. Technical and/or scientific background

The Fisher River basin consists primarily of PCTC, National Forest, and state School Trust lands and contain few human developments. The upper Pleasant Valley Fisher consists of several ranching operations which have dramatically altered riparian/wetlands in these areas. However, much of these lands still support functional intact big game and other wildlife habitats as well as vital, remnant populations of native trout (distribution, abundance, and genetic information recently published in the Montana Bull Trout Scientific Group 1996, and the Westslope Cutthroat Trout Recovery Plan, In Preparation. See also MFWP Interagency Fisheries data bases and maps for current data on inland red-band rainbow trout in Fisher River drainage).

In 1996, PCTC completed their Land Use Plan for western Montana. Their plan identified properties, primarily lands along lakes and rivers, that PCTC planned to offer for sale. Their plan also identified lands proposed for sale or exchange and lands for further study. PCTC has

subsequently marketed and successfully sold much of their water-based recreational lands to developers. Sale of these lands generates a greater economic return to the company as development lands than derived from timber management. However, subdivision of these lands would adversely affect resident fish and wildlife populations as well as public recreational opportunities.

PCTC initially identified the entire lower Fisher River corridor for future study. Recently, PCTC has determined that they must complete their analysis before the year 2000 at which time they would probably start marketing some parcels.

Fisheries habitats in the Fisher River have been severely degraded since the 1960's due to a number of reasons: construction of Libby Dam and the re-routing of the Burlington Railroad up the Fisher and Wolf Creek drainages; the introduction of nonnative fish species; management of timber resources which have impacted spawning habitats; and impacts of ditching and diking of agricultural lands in the upper Pleasant Valley Fisher River. The Fisher River basin supports bull trout cutthroat trout and inland redband rainbow trout, populations considered rare but recoverable. Pure westslope cutthroat trout are found primarily in the Silver Butte Fisher and other small tributaries. Extremely important genetically pure populations of inland redband rainbow trout also can be found in the upper Wolf Creek/Little Wolf drainages and in a few Pleasant Valley Fisher tributaries. Bull trout occur in West Fisher Creek (MFWP Information Services Unit, 1997).

Montana Power Company presently owns 7,800 acres (Lost Trail Ranch). A significant portion of the bottomland on this ranch will be turned over to the USFWS as FERC mitigation for Kerr Dam. The USFWS is pursuing cooperative funding with NRCS and others to obtain either conservation easements or fee-title to the balance of this ranch and allow for restoration of the Pleasant Valley Fisher River and its tributaries on this ranch. Additionally, two ranches have applied to the Wetland Reserve Program for much of their acreage in the valley bottom. Historically, these ranches grazed cattle on more than 20,000 acres of PCTC lands. If these conservation agreements get put into place, improvements on both uplands and riparian/wetlands over thousands of acres can be expected. This would be a major step in improving fisheries habitat throughout the rest of the basin and greatly enhance the proposed conservation easement on PCTC lands.

PCTC and the USFWS are also developing Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) for PCTC lands (Bull Trout and Aquatic Species Conservation Plan, PCTC 1997). The proposed conservation easement would be designed to complement conditions or terms agreed to by PCTC in their Habitat Conservation Plans for native fish species. This conservation easement could extend key habitat improvement measures developed for the HCP beyond the 30-year life of that agreement. It would also purchase development and subdivision rights that would only be restricted, not eliminated, by the HCP.

The Fisher River basin has long been noted for its abundant wildlife, particularly big game, and for quality recreational opportunities. The steep warm slopes and low elevations of the Fisher River/Wolf Creek areas consistently winter some of the highest densities of white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk and moose in northwest Montana. This area draws animals from a large area of the

Kootenai National Forest including Libby Creek/Cabinet Mountains, Pleasant Valley and Silver Butte Fisher River drainages and other drainages to the north. This subbasin comprises an entire hunting district (HD 103) which provided 28,733 deer hunter days and 14,454 elk hunter days during Montana's 5 week general hunting season in 1996. The Fisher and Wolf Creek drainages support a newly established pack of endangered gray wolves. It also supports populations of ruffed, blue and spruce grouse, aquatic and terrestrial furbearers, and nongame wildlife species.

Montana is faced with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with the largest private landowner in northwest Montana to achieve a substantial amount of fish and wildlife mitigation by preventing the future subdivision and development of lands in the Fisher River drainage and by obtaining rights of stream restoration for fish and wildlife habitat. Additionally, the project insures the existence of PCTC's timber base and recreational opportunities for the public over the long-term. This project, along with other projects mentioned above, offers an unprecedented opportunity to restore and protect native fish habitat throughout the Fisher River drainage. The project also provides a unique opportunity for both fish and wildlife mitigation programs to work cooperatively and synergistically with private and public sectors to achieve a landmark, large-scale, beneficial impact to northwest Montana's natural resource environment. In the long-term, enhancement and perpetual maintenance of these important fish and wildlife habitats will replace fish and wildlife and their habitats lost along the Kootenai and South Fork of the Flathead Rivers.

If the project is not completed, Montana could lose one of the last remaining undeveloped river valleys to homes, cabins, and eventually commercialization. In time, habitats would be fragmented and irreversibly impacted, public access would be restricted, and fish, wildlife, timber, and other resource management flexibility would be drastically reduced. The existing economy of the area would most likely shift from dispersed recreation and timber to rural development and commercial enterprises. To date, most local and state governing entities and other state and federal land management agencies as well as PCTC favor the status quo over a shift to other land uses. In sum, this project provides Montana with the unique opportunity to work with the largest private landowner in northwest Montana to the benefit of all parties. The assurance of manageable habitat, improved fisheries, continued public recreational opportunities, and timber resources provides some degree of social and economic security at a time when western Montana continues to change due to increasing pressures from human population growth and development.

b. Rationale and significance to Regional Programs

This project is included as part of the Libby Fisheries Mitigation Program. It is intended to meet the resident fish goal (10.1) to preserve and help recover native resident fish populations. Projects for Kerr mitigation and NRCS wetland restoration in the Pleasant Valley Fisher River will benefit native redband and cutthroat trout populations in this tributary. In addition, this conservation easement and habitat restoration opportunity associated with this project and PCTC's bull trout HCP, will benefit weak but recoverable populations of bull, cutthroat and redband trout in the Fisher River and its tributaries, including Wolf Creek (10.2A.1). The Fisher River drains into the Kootenai River below Libby Dam. Protection and restoration of the Fisher River watershed, through this and other projects mentioned previously, would improve water quality and seasonal flow regimes which would benefit Kootenai River fisheries. Recently drafted Fisheries Mitigation Guidelines for the Kootenai basin (Libby Dam Fisheries

Mitigation and Implementation Plan, 1997) provides relevant direction for this proposed project. These guidelines include the following:

- * protect, mitigate, and enhance biological production in affected waters;
- * emphasize natural fish production and habitat where ever possible;
- * emphasize mitigation for designated endangered (white sturgeon) and species of special concern (westslope cutthroat, bull, and interior redband rainbow trout) where appropriate;

MFWP's proposal to BPA for continued support of the Focus Watershed Coordinator position in the Kootenai highlights the need to work with PCTC in the Kootenai basin:

“Key subbasins within the Kootenai drainage, which are critical to native species restoration, are experiencing a rapidly progressing change in land ownership and management patterns. Subdivision and subsequent residential development of much of the agricultural and timber lands adjacent to waterways in the drainage likely poses one of the greatest threats to weak but recoverable stocks of trout species. PCTC, a major landholder in the Kootenai system is currently divesting itself of large tracks of its lakeshore and streamside holdings basin-wide.”

The proposed conservation easement would comprise **in-kind** fish and wildlife mitigation.

Opportunities to partnership with Montana's wildlife mitigation program is also an important part of this project (10.2A.1 & 11.2D.1). This project, and a related project on the Thompson River, could complete full mitigation for forest habitat losses, and most if not all of the remaining riparian habitat losses for both Libby and Hungry Horse Dams. It provides an opportunity to sustain levels of habitat and species productivity that would otherwise be lost to future subdivisions, thereby fully mitigating wildlife losses caused by Libby and Hungry Horse Dams (11.1). It offers a cost effective way to protect important, high priority, riparian/riverine habitats and crucial winter ranges for mule deer, elk and other big game species. Game populations support an endangered gray wolf packs in the Fisher River valley. The project would help long-term species diversity, complement state and federal wildlife management, provide significant partnership opportunities, address concerns over additions to public land ownership through a perpetual conservation easement on private land (11.2D.1). By maintaining commercial timber harvest, it will benefit local economies, maintain jobs, support the tax base and insure continued public enjoyment of these lands.

c. Relationships to other projects

This project would complement the FERC Kerr Dam mitigation projects and NRCS wetland reserve projects in the Fisher River drainage. Those projects could restore approximately 5,000 acres of streams and wetlands which historically supported cutthroat and inland redband trout.

PCTC is also developing a Habitat Conservation Plan with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This project would improve 1,462,000 acres of private land in western Montana and literally hundreds of miles of stream important to all resident fish species.

Washington Water Power is a partner in a similar project with the Montana Wildlife Mitigation

program on 102,000 acres along the Thompson River. Through FERC relicensing of Cabinet Gorge and Noxon Rapids Dams, they are interested in a financial partnership with that project. They have tentatively agreed to provide \$1.5 million for fisheries mitigation and are negotiating possible funding for wildlife mitigation as well. This will be combined with \$3,250,000 from the Montana wildlife trust fund and other partners.

The proposed project asks BPA to cooperate with Montana's Wildlife Mitigation Program in funding a large conservation project (up to 73,000 acres) which will strongly complement these other projects. The size of both the Thompson and Fisher River projects will result in completion of most, and possibly all, of the wildlife mitigation goals for both Libby and Hungry Horse dams.

The project scope may necessitate funding from other cooperators, both private and public. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is a financial partner in this project. MFWP habitat conservation funds could be used to supplement the budget. MFWP is also pursuing other public and private fund raising opportunities. The commitment by BPA to provide at least \$500,000 is essential to insure fishery resources are adequately addressed and to help leverage additional funds.

d. Project history (for ongoing projects)

The proposed fisheries conservation easement project is an outgrowth from Montana's ongoing Wildlife Mitigation Program. The Montana Wildlife Mitigation program was approved and included in the NPPC's 1987 Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment. This program is now funded by the Montana Wildlife Mitigation Trust Fund which was set up by agreement between BPA and Montana in 1988. The Wildlife Mitigation Trust Fund balance is \$15 million. The Wildlife Program has committed \$3,250,000 to this proposed conservation easement. Conservation easements on riparian/wetlands are the number one strategy for Hungry Horse and the number two strategy for Libby mitigation. Conservation easements are the number 2 strategy for both Libby and Hungry Horse Dams upland forest mitigation (Wood 1997). The wildlife mitigation program completed palouse prairie mitigation in FY 1996.

e. Proposal objectives

The major outcomes expected by the proposed project are: the perpetual maintenance and enhancement of wildlife and fish habitats on PCTC lands throughout the Fisher River basin; insurance that the landowner can continue to manage the lands for timber production with special considerations for fish habitat protection; and continued public recreational access.

Another outcome of the proposed conservation agreement is a mutually agreed upon management plan between MFWP and PCTC. The development of this plan will improve fish and wildlife habitat conditions in sensitive and critical areas. Achieving these outcomes on a landscape scale could meet all of Montana's Wildlife Mitigation objectives for Libby and Hungry Horse dams.

Goals of the proposed Fisher River conservation easement project are to:

1. restrict future subdivision and commercial development within this basin;
2. insure the existence of a viable timber base in the future to support local and regional

economies over time, managed in a way to sustain quality fisheries habitat;

3. allow for restoration and management of stream hydrology or streamside/river habitats;
4. provide for public access to these lands and waters;
5. provide the basis to work cooperatively with the landowner for long-term maintenance and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitats through time.
6. Maintain or increase fish and wildlife populations associated with this watershed.
7. Document current conditions in the baseline reports.
8. Continue monitoring of fish and wildlife population levels in the drainage. Begin annual monitoring of compliance with conservation easement terms and habitat conditions.

The major benefit of the proposed project is to prevent the gradual, incremental negative impacts which usually occur with land splits and increased human development. Another benefit will be the ability of the landowner, whether PCTC or another timber company, to manage their resources over a large landscape. This allows flexibility in harvest schedules, road closures, timing of harvest and other factors which, if managed in balance, will help maintain very important fish and wildlife populations and habitats.

This project has the potential to affect the future of fish and wildlife resources at a landscape scale. There is no question that if these lands were to be sold into other ownerships or subdivided into smaller lots for cabins and commercial developments that the overall quality and management flexibility for these fish and wildlife resources would be severely impaired.

The goal of the project can be stated as at least maintaining the status quo (which includes Habitat Conservation Plans addressing native fish habitats) in perpetuity. Part of the conservation purchase requires that MFWP and PCTC sign a management plan for the entire project area. The management plan can be changed through mutual agreement between the parties to help insure the sustained production of fish and wildlife resources, timber and recreational outcomes.

Project success will be measured by monitoring various elements described in the management plan on a regular basis. At a minimum, MFWP would continue to monitor fish and wildlife populations. MFWP would also monitor compliance with the terms of the agreement. In developing the management plan, MFWP may identify additional survey and inventory work required to measure outcomes and insure the intent of the conservation agreement is met.

f. Methods

MFWP will be the lead agency in developing, completing, and holding the proposed conservation agreement. MFWP must follow established NEPA and MEPA processes prior to final decisions and complete a detailed mutually agreed upon management and monitoring plan prior to acquiring

a conservation agreement. MFWP and PCTC are committed to communicating with all interested parties and stakeholders in designing a successful conservation agreement. Identified interests or stakeholders include: CSKT, County Commissioners from affected counties, all land management agencies, local planning offices, private conservation and sporting organizations; legislators; small private landowners; and other interested publics. Scoping was begun in 1998. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has agreed to facilitate this process and to assist with fund-raising.

The following outline describes the overall process:

Objective 1. Develop conservation easement terms and cost estimates:

- Task a. Select appraisers, approve methodology and complete certified appraisal;
Cost estimates will be developed by three certified appraisers following recognized appraisal principles and practices applicable to estimating fair market value.
- Task b. Negotiate easement terms with PCTC to protect native fish species;
Terms and purchase price will be negotiated by Deborah Dils, MFWP lands section supervisor with 14 years of pertinent experience. She will be assisted by the MFWP legal and biological staff and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation staff.

Objective 2. Complete appropriate NEPA/MEPA documents and public review process.

MFWP does MEPA review for every land project that we do. MFWP has purchased fee title or conservation easements covering 145,000 acres.

- Task a. Write Draft Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement.
- Task b. Submit draft EA for 60 day public review and comment.
- Task c. Hold public meetings to explain proposed project and solicit public comment.
- Task d. Incorporate public comment and issue Final EA/EIS and Draft Decision Notice.
- Task e. Draft appropriate legal documents for review by funding and approval agencies.

Objective 3. Obtain necessary funding and final authorities from PCTC, MFWP Commission, state land board and other cooperators to complete the project as recommended.

- Task a. Secure funding commitments from cooperators.
The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will help secure funding for this project as part of their role as project facilitator.
- Task b. Submit completed project proposal to appropriate decision-makers for approvals.
Once the NEPA/MEPA process is complete and a decision notice is drafted, the proposal must be approved by the MFWP Commission and the State Land Board.
- Task c. Finalize legal documents.

Task d. Sign and record conservation easement.

Objective 4. Monitor compliance and effectiveness of final agreement;

MFWP conducts periodic surveys of key fish and wildlife populations and harvest pressure. These would be continued. MFWP also completes annual reviews to monitor compliance with terms of each of our conservation easements.

g. Facilities and equipment

No special equipment requests are included in this project proposal.

h. Budget

Cost sharing

Organization	Item or service provided	% total project cost (incl. BPA)	Amount (\$)
MFWP (Wildlife Mitigation Trust Fund)	Acquisition and planning costs	33%	\$3,250,000
Other partners or subsequent years	Acquisition costs	62%	\$6,250,000
BPA Fish Mitigation	Acquisition costs	5%	\$500,000
Total project cost (including BPA portion)			\$10,000,000

The \$500,000 requested from the BPA resident fish budget will help provide the seed money, along with the wildlife trust fund dollars, to help raise the other needed funds. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is a partner in this project and will help raise the needed matching funds. We anticipate that fund raising efforts will extend through fiscal year 2002 or beyond. Unexpended year end funds from the BPA resident fisheries mitigation budget could be used to help provide these needed additional funds if/when they become available.

Section 9. Key personnel

Brian Marotz, Fisheries Program Officer, MFWP

Scott Snelson, Focus Watershed Coordinator- Kootenai River, MFWP

Alan Wood, Wildlife Mitigation Coordinator, MFWP

Debra Dils, Land Section Supervisor, MFWP

Each positions is a full-time (1 fte) with time on this project varying from 1-17 weeks/position.

BRIAN MAROTZ

Fisheries Program Officer (0.10 FTE)
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, Montana 59901
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E-mail marotz@digisys

Education

Master of Science – Fisheries Management
Louisiana State University - Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Estuarine Biology

15 Credits: Gulf Coast Research Institute
Ocean Springs, Mississippi.
Marine Science

Bachelor of Science – Biology (Aquatic Sciences)
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point, Wisconsin.
Freshwater Biology

16 Credits: S.E.A. Semester at Sea, Boston University
Woods Hole, Massachusetts
Marine Biology

Professional experience

1991-Present Fisheries Program Officer, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Kalispell, MT
Duties: Supervise Special Projects Office, Hydropower Mitigation and Focus Watershed Programs.

1989 – 1991 Fisheries Biologist, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Kalispell, MT
Duties: Hungry Horse Reservoir Research, Develop Hungry Horse Mitigation Program, Computer Modeling Flathead and Kootenai Drainages, Develop Integrated Rule Curves (IRCs) for Montana Reservoirs.

1985 – 1989 Fisheries Biologist, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Libby, Montana
Duties: Libby Reservoir Research, Kootenai Instream Flow Project, Computer Modeling Flathead and Kootenai Drainages, Develop Integrated Rule Curves (IRCs) for Mt Reservoirs.

1984 – 1985 Research Associate, Louisiana State University - Baton Rouge, LA
Duties: Estuarine Research to control salt water encroachment to Estuarine Marsh on the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge. Developed Operating Plan for Water Control Structures to Allow Migration of Catadromous Fish and Crustaceans

Publications Awards

Pertinent Publications Listed in this Document

1994 Governor's Award for Excellence in Performance as an Employee of the State of Montana

1994 Director's Award for Excellence as an Employee of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1989 Certified Fisheries Scientist
American Fisheries Society

Scott Snelson
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
475 Fish Hatchery Road
Libby, MT 59923
Phone (406) 293-4713
Fax (406) 293-6338
E-mail ssnelson@libby.org

Education Master of Science - Biology
1992 - 1996 Montana State University Bozeman, Montana. 3.8 GPA

Bachelor of Science - Fish and Wildlife Management
Montana State University Bozeman, Montana

Wildland Hydrology-Short Courses Pagosa Springs, Colorado
Applied Fluvial Geomorphology July 1996
River Morphology and Application August 1997

Performance Evaluation Training - Montana Dept. of Administration
Geographic Information Systems Training - MT Chapter Amer. Fish. Soc.
Clean Water Act Training - US Forest Service and MT Dept. of Env. Qual.
PADI certified Advanced SCUBA diver

Profession Experience

1997 - current: Focus Watershed Coordination Biologist, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Libby, MT
Duties: Coordinate formation of local watershed working groups for development of "grass-roots" watershed plans and facilitate implementation of plans integrating state, federal, tribal, and private resources.

1995-1997 - Project Leader - Libby Reservoir Excessive Drawdown Mitigation, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Libby, Montana
Duties: Identify key limiting factors for native fish stocks in Libby Reservoir, develop and implement mitigation actions for the excessive drafting of Libby Reservoir and provide implementable mitigating measures for the construction of Libby Dam to be included in the Libby Dam mitigation plan.

1992-1994 - Graduate Research Assistant, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana
Duties: Conducted research on the initial use of a newly accessible spawning stream by adult rainbow and brown trout and examined the use patterns of the stream by their progeny.

1993 Creel Survey Clerk, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Townsend, Montana
Duties: Conducted creel surveys on anglers on Canyon Ferry Reservoir. Surveys included examination of catch for hatchery impregnated pigments, scale, and vertebrae collection for strain evaluation research.

1989-199 Conservation Director, Montana Wildlife Federation, Bozeman, Montana
Duties: I administered the legislative lobby efforts of Montana's largest conservation organization which included bill drafting, legal research, coalition development, opinion poll design grass-roots network development, and coordinating and preparing hearing testimony. Other duties included grant development, education, fundraising, and local chapter establishment.

Awards Received

Wildlife Professional of the Year - Montana Wildlife Federation 1991.

ALAN WOOD
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, Montana 59901
Phone (406) 758-5219
Fax (406) 758-5363
E-mail alanwood@ptinet.net

Education Ph.D. Wildlife Management (1987), Montana State University, Bozeman

M.S. Wildlife & Range Resources (1980), Brigham Young University, Provo, UT

B.S. Biology (1978), Utah State University, Logan

Forest habitat types, Missoula, MT 1990
Applying the NEPA process, Missoula, MT 1991
Ecosystem Management, Missoula, MT 1993

Professional Experience

1994-Present: Wildlife Program Officer, Montana, Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Kalispell, MT.
Duties: Manage a program and budget to mitigate for previous losses of wildlife and wildlife habitats attributed to construction of Hungry Horse and Libby Dams.

1989-1994: Wildlife Program Specialist, Montana Department of State Lands, Missoula, MT.
Duties: Develop and implement a statewide management plan for 600,000 acres of state forest lands.

1988-1989: Project Biologist, Wyoming Game & Fish Department, Casper Wyoming.
Duties: Began a study to evaluate response of pronghorn and mule deer to petroleum developments.

1982-1988: Research Assistant/Instructor, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT.
Duties: Conduct a study on the ecology of mule and white-tailed deer populations. Summarize existing data on white-tailed deer in the northern great plains. Teach general ecology, field ecology, and computer programming labs for graduate-level courses in quantitative biology and population dynamics.

Selected Publications

Graham, D., J. Blaine, G. Joslin, L.J. Lyon, A. Sheldon, A. Wood and H. Zackheim. 1991. Wildlife diversity guidelines: A forest stewardship program for Montana. U.S. Forest Service, Missoula, MT.

Wood, A. K. 1993. Parallels between old-growth forest and wildlife population Mgmt. Wildl. Soc. Bull. 21:91-95.

Wood, A. K., D. Casey, J. Ellis, and G. Watson. 1993. Voluntary wildlife guidelines for the management of wildlife habitats in the streamside management zone. Montana Dept. of State Lands, Missoula, MT. 26pp.

Wood, A. K. et. al. 1995-98. Montana Wildlife Mitigation Program, Annual Reports. MFWP, Kalispell, MT.

Wood, A. K. 1997. Wildlife Mitigation Program for Hungry Horse and Libby Dams: Five Year Operating Plan for Fiscal Years 1998 through 2002. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Kalispell, MT. 20pp.

Awards

Biologist of the Year from the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society 1994.
Certificate of appreciation from the Montana Department of State Lands 1992.
Commendation from MFWP for dedication and professionalism in completion of a technical bulletin 1989.
Certified Wildlife Biologist by the Wildlife Society, Inc. 1989.
Elected to National Scientific Honor Society of Sigma Xi 1986.

Deborah Dils
Land Section Supervisor, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue, Helena MT 59620-0701
Phone 406-444-3939
FAX 406-444-3023
email ddils@mt.gov

Education: B.A. - San Diego State University
Over 200 hours in appraisal of land interests and negotiation training
pertinent to government acquisitions

Professional Experience:

1993 to present: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Field Services Division Land Section Supervisor
Duties: Responsible for acquisition, disposal of all types of land interests for state agency;
including fee title, easements, leases, permits. Supervises retention of land records,
property management, budgets, tax payments to counties, and section personnel involved
in acquisition activities for department

1985 to 1993: Montana Department of Transportation, Land Section Supervisor, Right of Way
Supervisor, Land Agent
Duties: Responsible for acquisition, disposal of land interests for state agency including fee
title, easements, leases, permits. Supervised retention of land records, property
management of department lands, tax payments to counties, and section personnel

Accomplishments:

Successfully completed conservation easements totalling approximately 145,000 acres since 1994
and many more fee acquisitions on behalf of FWP Divisions during the same period of time.
Acquired several hundred properties for MDOT.

Awards

Governor's and Director's Awards for Lands Program accomplishments in 1996

Section 10. Information/technology transfer

There would be no new technology developed as a result of this proposal. However, the project provides an opportunity for unprecedented accomplishment of fish and wildlife mitigation as well as new partnerships. Consequently, MFWP would report accomplishments of this project, through a variety of channels, when it is completed.

Congratulations!